

THE NUTCRACKER AND THE MOUSE-KING

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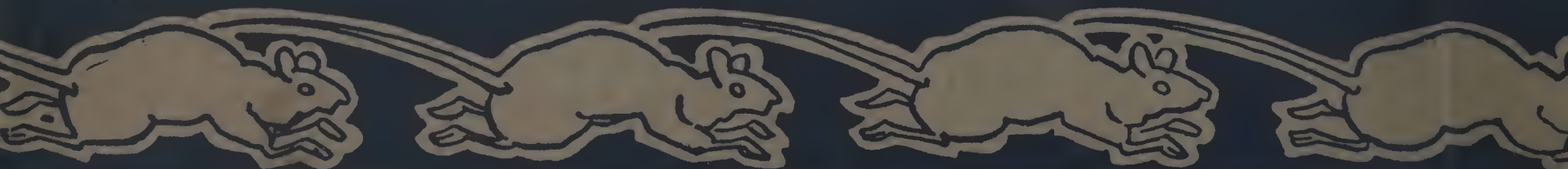


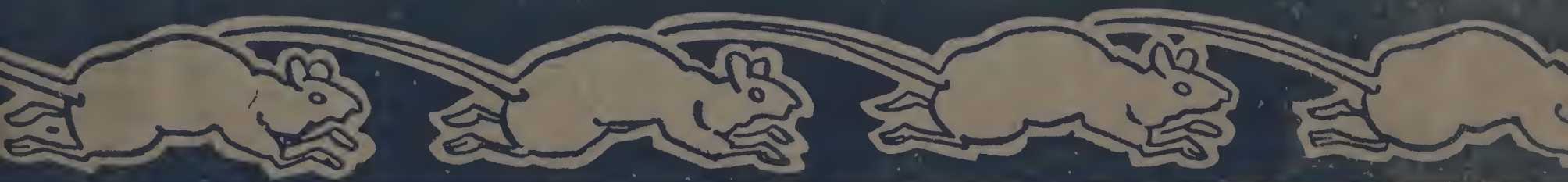
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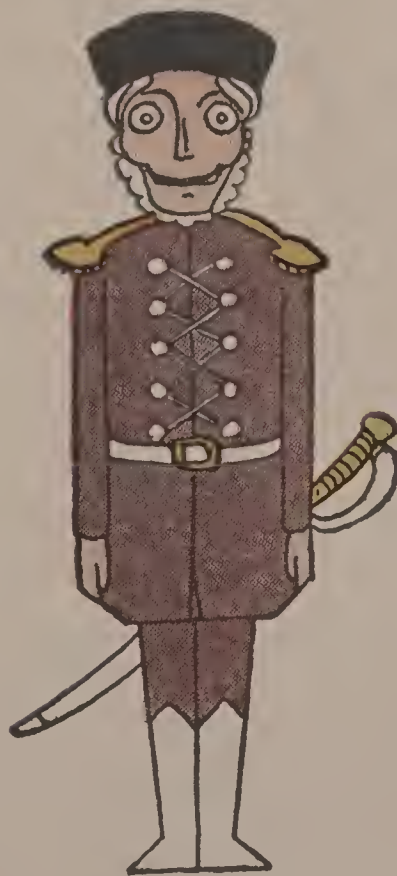
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THE NUTCRACKER
AND
THE MOUSE-KING





Fritz and Marie sat huddled together on a sofa.


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BY ERNST T. A. HOFFMANN

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ALBERT  WHITMAN
& CO.
CHICAGO

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Printed in the U. S. A.

OCT 14 1930

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Once it was a marionette.

FOREWORD

The story of "The Nutcracker and the Mouse-King" is so full of word pictures that no one in the whole world could draw them all, though each picture is so beautiful and full of color that one can scarcely resist trying to.

Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann wrote this story in Germany more than a hundred years ago—for his own pleasure, we imagine—and he put into it all the beautiful things he could think of, dolls and castles, candies and candles, crimson lakes and sparkling gardens and hundreds and hundreds of fairy people, and comical people too.

The story is most exciting, all about the long battle between the Nutcracker and the Mouse-King with his seven heads and seven golden crowns, the battle that with Marie's help ended in victory for the Nutcracker. To show his gratitude for her kindness, the Nutcracker takes Marie through her father's overcoat sleeve to the Land of Dolls.

It is in this part of the book that the author has the greatest fun making word pictures. There is Lemonade River, villages of sugar cookies and transparent candy, gates of almonds and raisins, confetti forests, thousands of little people shouting, laughing and joking; and everywhere a fragrance of oranges and roses.

The gay imaginings in the book, especially those in the Land of Dolls, amused Peter Tschaikovsky, the great Russian musician, and he has written the music of "The Nutcracker Suite" all about this tale. The Chinese dance, the waltz of the Flowers and the dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy are all drawn from these chapters of Marie's visit to Toy Land with the Nutcracker. And you can see the gay little people when you hear the music, just as you can when you read the story.

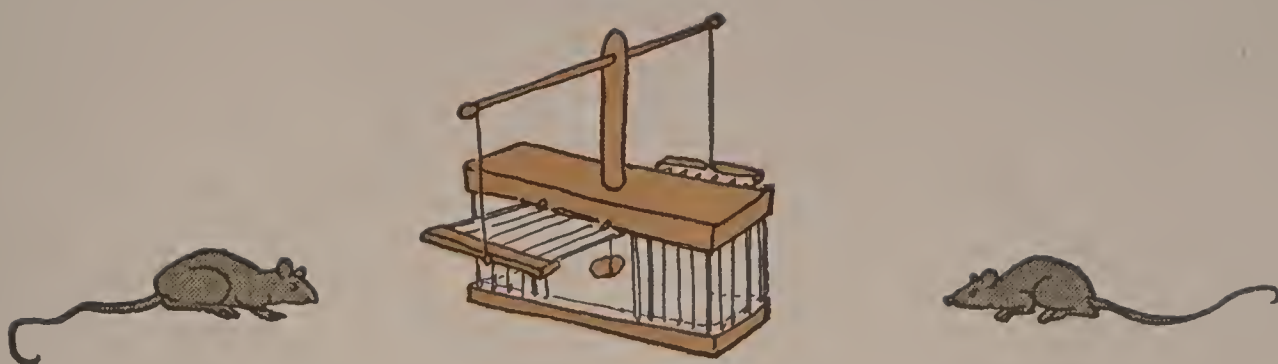
We two who have been translating the story and doing the drawings enjoyed ourselves more than tongue can tell. Now you begin the book and see how happy you are.

EMMA L. BROCK.

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	vii
The Day Before.....	7
The Gifts	13
The Surprise	18
Magic	24
The Battle of the Sugar Bullets.....	35
The Pleasant Surprise.....	41
The Fairy Tale of the Hard Nut.....	48
Continuation of the Fairy Tale of the Hard Nut.....	60
Conclusion of the Fairy Tale of the Hard Nut.....	69
The Victory	87
The Kingdom of the Dolls	98
The Candy Capital.....	106
Conclusion	119





LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fritz and Marie sat huddled together on a sofa.....	Frontispiece
Hundreds of lights sparkled like little stars.....	6
Marie looked at the beautiful pictures.....	25
"Tell it to me, will you please?".....	43
The Queen knew at once that it was Mrs. Mouserinks.....	53
He murmured, "Not enough pork".....	55
The Mouse Queen ran to the corner of the room.....	61
This longing came when they were in a deep jungle in Asia.....	71
The victorious Nutcracker knelt on one knee.....	95
"Will you be good enough to go up?" called Nutcracker.....	99
How glorious it was to ride in this shell-wagon!.....	107
The Confetti Grove.....	111
"Oh, are you like Pirlipat?".....	117



Hundreds of lights sparkled like little stars.

THE NUTCRACKER AND THE MOUSE-KING



Godfather Drosselmeier.

THE DAY BEFORE

It was the day before Christmas. Fritz and Marie Stahlbaum sat huddled together on a sofa in a little back room, for they had been forbidden to go near the living room or the drawing room. Fritz was whispering very secretly to Marie. "Early this morning," he told her, "I heard all kinds of noises,—rustling of paper and pounding behind the locked rooms." Also, he confided to her, "I saw a small, dark man, with a large box under his arm, glide noiselessly through the hall."

“Who could that have been?” asked Marie.

“Why, Godfather Drosselmeier! who else could it have been?”

At this Marie clapped her little hands for joy, and exclaimed, “Oh, what kind of a beautiful toy can it be that Godfather has made for us this year?”

Judge Drosselmeier was not a handsome man. He was short and thin, and his face was full of wrinkles. Over his right eye he wore a large black patch and as he had lost all his hair, he wore a beautiful white wig. To be sure, the children knew that Godfather was a very skillful man, for he not only understood clocks but he also made some himself.

This was the reason that whenever one of the clocks became ill and could not sing any more, they sent for Godfather Drosselmeier. He would come, remove his wig and his little yellow coat, and tying on an apron, would take out a pointed instrument and run it into the clock. This always made little Marie sad, but seemed to help the clock, as it at once became alive again and began to purr, to strike and to sing, to the great joy of every one.

Always when he came, he brought something attractive in his pocket for the children. Once it was a marionette, who could curtsy and turn his eyes; once a box, out of which a bird would hop; and another time it would be a new kind of toy such as they had never seen. But when Christmas came he always made some beautiful mechanical toy which only a very clever man could make. For this reason their parents would put it away for safekeeping after it had been presented to them.

“Oh! what kind of an ingenious thing can it be that Godfather Drosselmeier has made for us this year?” whispered Marie.

“This time,” replied Fritz, “it can hardly be anything else than a fortress, in which all kinds of handsome soldiers are marching back and forth. Other soldiers must come to storm the fortress, and then all at once, the soldiers inside will fire a cannon which will make a noise like thunder.”

“No, no,” interrupted Marie, “Godfather Drosselmeier told me about a nice garden, in which there is a

large lake, on which superb swans with gold neck-bands are swimming and singing lovely songs. Then a little girl comes out of the garden to the lake and beckons the swans and feeds them with candy.”

“Swans do not eat candy,” Fritz interrupted harshly, “and an entire garden Godfather cannot make. Then too, we have very little joy from his toys; they are always taken away from us at once. I would rather have what father and mother give us, for those toys we can keep and do with as we like.”

Again the children took turns in guessing what presents they were to receive this year. Marie thought that Mamsell Trudchen, her large doll, had changed much,—for clumsier than ever, she was always falling to the floor. This showed in bad marks on her face, and her clothing was now anything but clean. All her warnings had not helped. And mother had smiled to herself when she had seen how pleased Marie had been with Gretchen’s little parasol. Fritz assured Marie that he was much in need of a fine chestnut horse to add to his stable, and he also needed to add



Mamsell Trudchen.

cavalry to his troops. He declared father was well aware of this. Little Marie became quiet as if in meditation, but Fritz murmured to himself, "A chestnut horse and hussars I should love to have."

In the meantime, it had become very dark. Fritz and Marie, sitting close together, did not dare to speak. It seemed to them they could hear the rustling of wings and from a far distance superb music. A bright light now appeared upon the wall and the children knew that the Christ-Child had gone on to other happy children.

In that moment they heard a silvery bell ring, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling, and the doors flew open and such a splendor greeted them from these rooms that both children exclaimed, "Oh! Oh!" and stood entranced on the threshold. Then father and mother came for-

ward, took the children by the hand, and said, "Come, come, dear children and see what the Christ-Child has brought for you."



THE GIFTS

One can just imagine how the children stood and stared, quite silently, and how after some little time Marie, with a deep sigh, called, "Oh how beautiful,—how beautiful," and Fritz turned several somersaults successfully. The children must have been very good and obedient throughout the year, for never before had they received such superb presents.

The large Christmas tree in the center was laden with gold and silver apples, and like birds and blossoms, sugar almonds and bright bonbons and other pretty cakes came forth from the branches. The most wonderful thing about the tree, however, was the hundreds of lights that sparkled like stars, and the tree seemed to invite them in a most friendly fashion to come and pluck its buds and fruits. Around the tree everything shone in bright and superb colors.

What beautiful things there were—yes, almost impossible to describe. Marie at once noticed the neatest, daintiest dolls and all kinds of little utensils. A silk dress, trimmed with colorful ribbons, was hanging on

a rack so that Marie could look at it from all sides, and this she did, and kept calling, "Oh the beautiful, dear dress! And shall I really be allowed to wear it?"

In the meantime Fritz had galloped three or four times around the table on his new chestnut horse, which he had really found hitched to the table. Dismounting, he announced that it was a wild horse but he would soon tame him. Then he noticed his new squadron of hussars which were very splendidly dressed in red and gold uniforms, carried silver weapons, and rode on such shimmering white horses that one could almost believe they too were of silver.

Just as the children had quieted down a little, they espied open picture books and were looking at them when the bell rang again. They now knew that Godfather Drosselmeier would present his gifts, and hurried to the table near the wall. The screen behind which he had been hiding such a long time was quickly removed. And what may we suppose they saw?

On a green lawn with many bright flowers stood a large castle that had mirror windows and gold towers.

A chime of bells could be heard ringing. Doors and windows flew open and they saw tiny men and women richly adorned with plumed hats and long trained robes promenading in the rooms. The central hall almost seemed to be in flames, because so many little lights were burning in silver candelabra. Little children in short waistcoats and skirts were dancing, keeping time with the chimes. A gentleman in an emerald green cloak beckoned from one of the windows and then disappeared again, and yes, even Godfather Drosselmeier, no higher than father's thumb, would appear at the door of the castle and then go back into it again.

Fritz, with his arms resting on the table, had been looking at the castle and the dancing and promenading little figures, when he called, "Godfather Drosselmeier, let me go into your castle."

The judge explained to him that this was impossible. He was right, for it was stupid of Fritz to think he could go into a castle which even with its gold towers was so much smaller than himself. Of course Fritz could understand this, but after a while, when



The Castle.

in the same manner the ladies and gentlemen promenaded, the children danced, the green-cloaked man appeared at the window, and Godfather Drosselmeier came to the door over and over again, Fritz called impatiently, "Godfather Drosselmeier, now you must come out of the other door."

"That cannot be done," the Judge replied.

"Well, then make the green man who looks out of the window walk with the others."

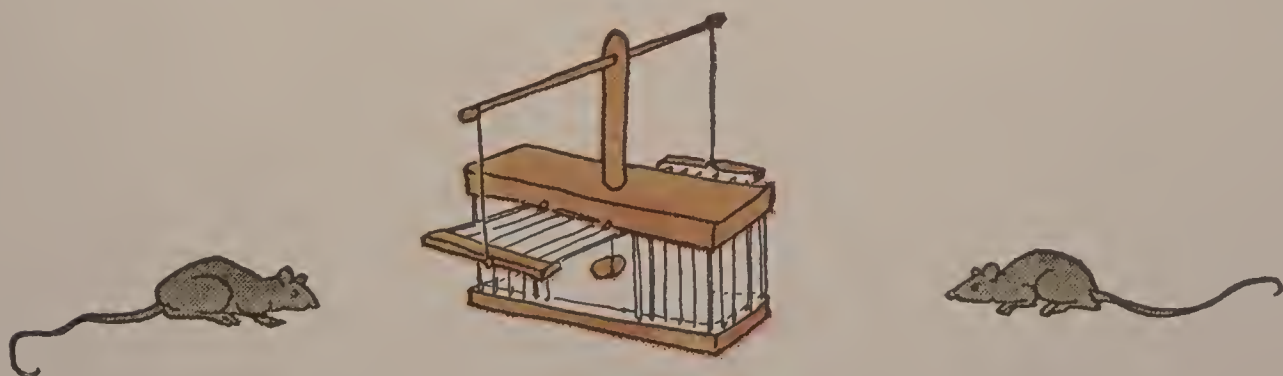
"No, that cannot be brought about either," replied the judge.

"Well," cried Fritz, "then let the children come out, so I can examine them better."

The judge became vexed, and replied impatiently, "As the mechanism is made, so it must remain."

"Well," said Fritz in a subdued tone, "then I prefer my hussars. They can be made to maneuver forward and backward the way I want them to and are not locked up in a house." Then he ran to the other table and had his squadron on the silver horses march back and forth and perform to his heart's content.

Marie also had slipped away, for she too, had tired of seeing the dolls in the castle always doing the same thing, but being more polite than Fritz she did not wish any one to notice it. The judge had become cheerful again and gave the children some handsome brown men and women, with gold faces, hands and legs. These smelled sweet and delicious like honey cakes, which was a pleasant surprise.



THE SURPRISE

Marie had not left the Christmas table for she had just discovered something she had not noticed before. When Fritz had removed his soldiers who had been "on parade" just next to the tree, a splendid little man became visible, standing there quietly and modestly.

To be sure much fault could be found with his body, for the trunk not only seemed much too large for the thin little legs, but the head also seemed too large. His clothes, however, covered up his defects, as these seemed to belong to a man of taste and culture. He was dressed in a glossy violet coat worn by Husars, with many white buttons and lacings, the same kind of trousers, and the handsomest little boots that ever were seen on the feet of an officer. These fitted the neat little legs so closely that they seemed to be painted on them.

It was comical that with this outfit he should have worn a narrow, clumsy cape that looked quite wooden, and on his head a miner's cap. Marie in

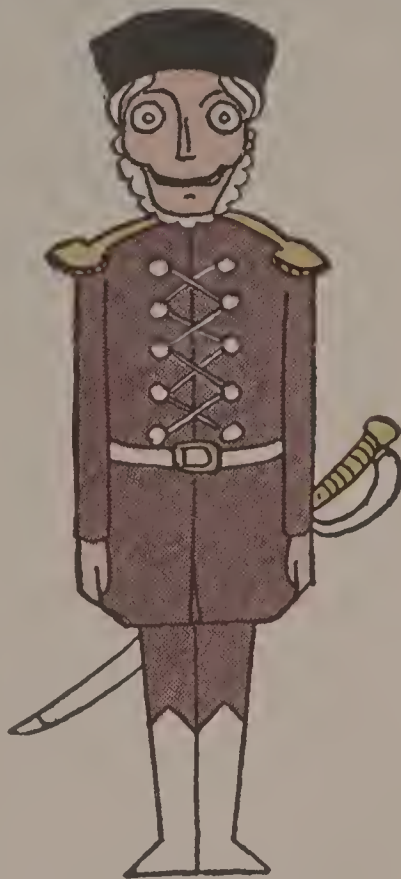
noticing this remembered that Godfather Drosselmeier also wore a very plain cloak and a funny cap, but still was a very dear godfather.

While Marie was examining this neat little man more intently, for she had taken a fancy to him at her first glance, she became more and more aware of what a good-natured expression his face had. From his light green eyes, a little too large and protruding, nothing but friendship and good will shone forth. Around his chin the little man wore a most becoming, well-cared-for beard of white cotton, which made more noticeable the jolly smile on his lips.

"Oh, father," Marie called suddenly, "to whom does the darling little man belong, who is leaning against the tree?"

"That little man," replied the father, "shall work industriously for all of you. He shall crack all the hard nuts for you with his teeth, and he belongs as much to your older sister Luise as to you and Fritz."

With that their father picked him up carefully from the table and when he lifted up the wooden cape the little man opened his mouth very wide, showing



A splendid little man.

two rows of very white pointed teeth. Marie at her father's request, pushed a nut into his mouth, and crack—the little man had bitten it to pieces, so that the shell fell away and the sweet kernel of the nut remained in her hands.

Now everyone knew at once, even Marie, that this dainty little man was a descendant of the race of nutcrackers and was carrying on the business of his forefathers.

Marie cried out with joy, and her father said, "As you, Marie, are so much pleased with your friend Mr. Nutcracker, he shall be under your care and pro-

tection. Sister Luise and Fritz, however, shall have as much right to use him as you have."

Marie embraced the Nutcracker at once and had him crack some nuts, but she always chose the smallest so that the little man did not need to open his mouth too wide, for that was not becoming to him. Luise too came over, and for her also Mr. Nutcracker had to do service, which, however, he seemed to enjoy, as he kept right on smiling.

Fritz in the meantime, had become tired from so much riding and exercising. When he heard the merry cracking of nuts, he jumped up and joined his sisters. He was laughing heartily at the sight of the comical little man, who was being passed from hand to hand and could not stop opening and closing his mouth with a snap. Fritz kept pushing the largest and hardest nuts into the Nutcracker's mouth until all of a sudden—crack—crack—three little teeth fell out of his mouth and his whole lower jaw was loose and shaky.

"Oh my poor, dear Nutcracker," sobbed Marie and took him away from Fritz.

"He is a foolish, stupid fellow," said Fritz. "He

wants to be a Nutcracker and has a weak set of teeth—and probably doesn't understand his trade either. Give him to me, Marie. He shall crack nuts for me even if he loses the rest of his teeth and all of his jaw, for who cares for that good-for-nothing!"

"No, no," replied Marie, "you shall not have my dear Nutcracker—just see how sadly he is looking at me and showing me his sore mouth. You, you are a hard-hearted person—you whip your horses and perhaps you would even have one of your soldiers punished with death."

"That must be, has to be, you don't understand," called Fritz, "but the Nutcracker belongs as much to me as to you, so give him to me." Marie began to cry violently and quickly wrapped the sick Nutcracker in her little handkerchief.

The parents came forward with Godfather Drosselmeier. "I have expressly placed the Nutcracker under Marie's protection," said the father, "and as I see that he needs it very much at this time, she shall have full power, without anyone else having anything to say about it. I am much astonished at Fritz, that he

should require further service from someone who became ill while serving him. He ought to know that one never places a wounded soldier in rank and file."

Fritz was much ashamed, and without paying any more attention to nuts or Nutcracker, crept over to the other side of the table where his hussars, after posting strong sentinels on guard, had moved into their night quarters.

Marie gathered up Nutcracker's lost teeth, and around his injured chin she tied a pretty white ribbon which she had unfastened from her dress. Then she wrapped him even more carefully into her handkerchief as he seemed to look pale and frightened. Thus she rocked him in her arms, as if he were a small child, and looked at the beautiful pictures in the new picture book which was among the many other gifts received today.



MAGIC

In the Stahlbaum's living room, just as one entered the door on the left wall stood a high cupboard in which the children kept all the pretty things which were given to them each year. Their father had this cupboard made by a very skillful cabinetmaker, who had used such clear glass and had arranged everything in it so cleverly, that all the gifts looked brighter and lovelier in it than when one held them in one's hands.

On the upper shelf, inaccessible to Marie and Fritz, stood Godfather Drosselmeier's mechanical toys and the shelf just below it contained their picture books. The two lower shelves Fritz and Marie used for whatever they wanted. It usually happened, however, that Marie used the lower space as a home for her dolls, while Fritz used the shelf above it as barracks for his soldiers.

That was what had happened today also for while Fritz was setting up his hussars above, Marie had taken out Mamsell Trudchen, and had moved the new, beautifully dressed doll into the well furnished



Marie looked at the beautiful pictures.

rooms and had invited herself to tea and cakes. The room was certainly well furnished, and any other child would have been happy to possess such a little flowered sofa, such charming little chairs, such a dear tea table, and above all, such a bright brass bed in which the most beautiful dolls could rest. All of this stood in the corner of the cupboard, the walls of which were papered with gay colored pictures. In this room, the new doll, whose name was Mamsell Clärchen, could feel much at home.

It was almost midnight and Godfather Drosselmeier had been gone for a long time, and still Fritz and Marie could not come away from the cupboard, although their mother was urging them to go to bed. "It is true," called Fritz, "the poor hussars also want to rest, for while I am here not one even dares to nod, I am certain of that."

With that he departed, but Marie was begging, "Just a little while longer; let me stay here, Mother, as I have several things to attend to; and when they are done, I will go to bed at once."

As Marie was a sensible and obedient child her

mother could leave her with the playthings without worrying about her. To guard against her being so engrossed in the new doll that she might forget the lights, her mother extinguished all those around the cupboard, and left burning only the lamp that was suspended from the ceiling in the middle of the room which gave a soft mellow light.

“Go to bed soon, dear, or you will not be able to get up in time tomorrow morning,” called her mother, as she went into her bedroom.

As soon as Marie found she was alone, she began to do the things so dear to her heart. She still had the injured Nutcracker in her arm, wrapped in her handkerchief, and now she laid him carefully on the table, unwrapped him and looked after his wounds. Nutcracker was very pale, and smiled so sadly that Marie became sad herself.

“Oh, Nutcracker,” she whispered, “do not be angry that brother Fritz hurt you so. He did not mean to do it, but he has become a little hard-hearted through his being so much with rough soldiers. But aside from this he is a very good boy, I can assure you. Now I will

nurse you until you are well and happy again. I shall ask Godfather Drosselmeier to replace your teeth and set your shoulder as he understands how to do such things.”

When she pronounced the name of Drosselmeier, she noticed that her friend, the Nutcracker, drew down his mouth, and his eyes seemed to spout green sparks. Just as she was about to be surprised, however, she noticed the Nutcracker had the same honest face again, with the same sad smile, and she concluded it must have been the draft that made the lamp flicker which had so changed his face. “Am I not a foolish girl to be so easily frightened and to believe that this wooden doll could make up faces? But I do love the Nutcracker because he is so comical and good-natured, and for that reason he must be nursed.”

Then Marie took Mr. Nutcracker in her arms, walked over to the cupboard, and stooping down whispered to the new doll, “I beg of you, dear Mamsell Clärchen, be generous and give your bed to the ill and wounded Nutcracker, and make use of the sofa, as best you can. Remember, that you are well and

strong, for otherwise you would not have such fat, red cheeks. Remember too, that very few of the most beautiful dolls possess such a soft sofa."

Clärchen in her splendid Christmas apparel looked very elegant and selfish, but uttered no word.

"Why do I go to so much trouble?" said Marie, placing the Nutcracker quietly and softly in the bed and taking a ribbon she had worn, she put it around his wounded shoulders and covered him up almost to his nose. "But he must not remain near Clärchen," she said and took the bed with the Nutcracker in it and placed it in the upper shelf, right near the village where Fritz's hussars were encamped.

She locked the cupboard and was going into the bedroom, when she heard a soft rustling, fluttering, and whispering behind the stove, behind the chairs and behind the cabinet. The tall grandfather's pendulum clock whirred louder and louder, but it did not strike. Marie looked up and saw that the large, gilded owl sitting on the clock had lowered her wings so that the whole top of the clock was covered, and the ugly cathead with the crooked bill was pushed forward.

And louder it buzzed, with distinct words:

“Tick-tock, tick-tock—

Now softly purrs the clock,

Little Mouse-King’s ears can hear,

Whirr, whirr, whirr,

Sing him the songs of yore

For soon he’ll be no more.

Strike, clock, strike!”

And pum, pum, pum, it struck with a muffled and hollow sound twelve times. Marie, now badly scared, was about to run away, when she saw Godfather Drosselmeier sitting on the clock instead of the owl, with his yellow coat tails like wings hanging down on either side.

She called in a crying voice, “Godfather Drosselmeier, Godfather Drosselmeier, what are you doing up there? Come on down and do not frighten me so, you bad godfather.”

Just then a furious giggling and whistling started all around her and it seemed to her as if a thousand little feet were trotting and running in the walls, and a thousand little lights were looking through the



For they moved forward at once.

cracks in the floor. But they were not lights. No, no, they were sparkling little eyes and Marie became aware that everywhere mice were peeping out and were pushing themselves forward.

Very soon she heard trot, trot, trot, hop, hop, hop, and more and more mice galloped around and at last took positions in distinct rows, just as Fritz's soldiers did when they were ready to go into battle. Marie thought this very funny, and, as she was not afraid of mice, her timidity left her. Then all at once, she heard such a shrill whistle that the chills ran down her back.

Now, what do you suppose she saw? Just in front of her feet as if it had come through the floor there appeared with a hissing and whistling noise a

mouse with seven heads, a bright crown glistening on each head. The mouse with its seven heads and seven crowns gave three loud squeaks, which seemed to be a command to the entire regiment, for they moved forward at once. Then trot, trot, trot, hop, hop, hop, they came toward the cupboard and directly toward Marie, who was standing close to the glass door.

Her heart was beating so fast from being afraid that she felt as if it would jump out. Half fainting, she turned, when clash, clash, and the pane of glass from the cabinet fell to the floor, for Marie had pushed her elbow through it. At that moment she felt a sharp pain in her left arm, but forgot it for the moment in her relief at hearing no more hissing and squeaking. Everything had quieted down, and although she did not dare look toward the floor, she thought the clatter of the falling glass must have frightened the mice into their holes.

But what did she hear now? Just behind her in the cabinet there was a commotion, and low, pleasant voices said, "Wake up, wake up; we must fight, we must fight; in this night, in this night," and accom-

panying these voices she could hear a chime of bells ring out merrily.

“Oh!” said Marie, “those are my little chimes.” As she moved to one side, she saw strange lights and caught glimpses of all the dolls running around waving their arms excitedly.

All at once Mr. Nutcracker arose, threw the blanket away and jumped out of bed with both feet at once, calling loudly, “Crack-crack-crack, foolish mouse pack, crick-crack-crick-crack!”

With that he pulled out his little sword and flourished it in the air, calling, “You, my dear vassals, friends, and brothers, will you assist me in this severe combat?”

At once three marionettes, one pantalon, four chimney sweeps, two zither players and one drum major called out, “Yes sir, we will cleave to you most loyally. We will go forward with you to combat, victory or death,” and followed the enthusiastic Nutcracker in a dangerous leap from the second shelf. Yes, they could easily follow, for not only did they wear clothes

of silk and velvet, but inside they were made of cotton and sawdust, and fell down like bags of wool.

But the poor Nutcracker would certainly break his arms and legs, for it was almost two feet from the upper to the lower shelf and his body was as brittle as if it had been blown of glass. Yes, Nutcracker would certainly have broken his arms and legs, if at the instant he was about to jump, Mamsell Clärchen had not leaped from the sofa and caught the hero, sword and all, in her two arms.

Quickly he tore off the ribbon with which Marie had tied up his shoulder, pressed it to his lips, and using it for a sash, swung his bright sword boldly and jumped like a bird from the edge of the cabinet to the floor. At this moment one could hear the squeaking and screeching of the mice again. Oh, under the large table was the army of mice, and above all towered the bad Mouse-King with the seven heads. Oh, now what will happen!

THE BATTLE OF THE SUGAR BULLETS

“Beat the general march, trusty drummer,” called the Nutcracker.

Very loudly and at once the drummer began to drum in the most artistic manner, so that the windows in the glass cabinet shook and rumbled. Now it began to roar and rattle inside. Marie became aware that the covers of the boxes in which Fritz’s army was encamped had opened and the soldiers jumped down into the lower shelf, and there formed into a battalion.

Nutcracker ran toward Pantalon who, pale and with chin quivering, said very solemnly, “General, I know your courage and your experience and now we must consider the whole situation and make a quick decision. I entrust you with the command of the several cavalry and artillery companies. A horse you do not need for you have long legs and can gallop fairly well. Do now what your profession demands.”

Pantalon immediately pressed his long thin fingers to his mouth and gave such a sharp whistle that it sounded as if a hundred little trumpets were blown.



The sugar bullets—

Then one could hear stamping and neighing in the cabinet, and Fritz's cuirassiers and dragoons came forward, the new hussars foremost.

All took their positions on the floor. Now regiment after regiment marched past Nutcracker with flying colors and martial music and stood at attention across the floor of the room. Before them all rattled Fritz's cannon, surrounded by the gunners. In a few moments one could hear them boom, and soon Marie saw the sugar bullets playing havoc among the mice. Especially noticeable and shooting from mother's foot-



Playing havoc among the mice.

stool was a battery which shot honey-cakes into the mice, scattering and bowling them over.

Still they came nearer and nearer, even running over the cannon. Then boom—boom, and Marie could hardly see what was happening for dust and smoke, but she was certain that a victory on either side was doubtful. The mice seemed to produce more troops right along, and the little silver pills which they hurled so skillfully, could be heard as they struck the glass of the cabinet. Then burr, burr, puff — boom —

boom—rip, rip, rap, and all the mice and the Mouse-King squeaked and screeched, and above it all one could hear Nutcracker's mighty voice, giving out necessary commands, as he strode past the firing battalions.

During the heat of battle troops of mice cavalry swarmed out from under the cabinet, and with a great fury and loud squeaking attacked the left wing of Nutcracker's army. But what resistance did they find here? Slowly, for the condition of the floor would allow no haste, one corps under the command of two Chinese emperors, had pushed forward and taken position in the square. These brave, gayly colored, and lordly troops, consisting of many gardeners, Tyroleans, clowns, harlequins, barbers, lions, tigers and monkeys were fighting with composure, courage and persistence.

With heroic bravery this battalion would have wrested the victory from the enemy, had it not been that a daring, hostile mouse captain rashly pushed himself forward and bit off the head of a Chinese emperor, who in falling killed two Tyroleans and one monkey.

This made a break in the line, through which the enemy gained entrance and soon the entire battalion was shattered, so that Nutcracker stood before the cabinet with only a handful of men.

“The Reserves, forward! Pantalón! Tambour! Skaramuz! where are you?” called the Nutcracker, who was hoping for more troops from the cabinet. A few dark-skinned men and women, the honey cakes with gold faces, hats, and helmets, came forward, but they fought so stupidly that they did not hit the enemy, and came near tearing the cap from their own commander-in-chief. The enemy riflemen soon bit off their legs, so they fell forward and in doing so killed several of Nutcracker’s companions in arms.

Now the Nutcracker was entirely surrounded by the enemy and was in the greatest danger and distress. He wanted to jump over the ledge of the cabinet, but his legs were too short. Clara and Gretchen had fainted and so could not help him. Hussars and dragoons leaped merrily by him into the cabinet. In his great need he called, “A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!” At that instant two enemies took hold

of his wooden cape, and in triumph the Mouse-King came forward at full speed, screeching from his seven throats:

Hardly realizing what she was doing, Marie called, "Oh, my poor Nutcracker," took off her left slipper and hurled it with all the force she could muster into the pack of mice and their Mouse-King.

At this moment everything seemed to be in confusion and to float away, for the pain in Marie's left arm was more severe than before, and she sank to the floor in a faint.



THE PLEASANT SURPRISE

When Marie awoke from her deep sleep, she was lying in her bed and the bright sun shone through the ice-covered panes of the windows. Close beside her sat a strange man whom she soon recognized as Dr. Wendelstern. In a low voice he whispered, "Now she is awake." Then Marie's mother came in and looked at her with an anxious, searching glance.

"Oh! mother dear," whispered Marie, "are all those horrid mice gone and was the good Nutcracker rescued?"

The doctor winked to her mother as she replied, "Don't worry, my child. All the mice are gone and the Nutcracker is in the cabinet safe and sound. But we have been much worried about you, for that is what happens when children are disobedient and do not mind their parents. You played with your dolls very late last evening, and you became sleepy. Perhaps a little mouse came out from under the cupboard, although we seldom see one, and frightened you. You pushed your elbow into a pane of glass in the cabinet

and cut your arm so severely that the doctor just now removed little splinters of glass, and says you might have had a stiff arm, or even bled to death. Thank heaven, I awoke about midnight and seeing you were not in your bed, I went into the living room. There you were with Fritz's soldiers and your dolls all about you. The Nutcracker was on your bleeding arm and not far away was your left slipper."

"Yes, Mother," Marie interrupted, "those were still the traces of the great battle between the dolls and the mice. I became so terrified when the Nutcracker was taken prisoner that I threw my shoe at the mice and after that I don't remember what happened."

Now the doctor took her pulse and said she had better stay in bed as she had a little fever. Thus she had to remain in bed several days and the time passed very slowly for she couldn't play or do much. Only at twilight her mother would come in and sit with her and tell her lovely stories.

Just as her mother had finished the story of Prince Farkardin, the door opened and Godfather Drosselmeier entered with the words, "Well, I really wanted



"Tell it to me, will you please?"

to come myself and see how Marie is and how her injured arm is getting on."

When Marie saw her godfather, the picture of the night before came into her mind, and she called to him, "Oh! godfather, you were very horrid last night. I saw you sit on the clock and spread your coat-tails so it shouldn't strike loud and frighten the mice away. I also heard you call the Mouse-King. Why didn't you come to the rescue of Nutcracker and me, for you are to blame that I am ill and wounded in bed."

Marie's mother asked in an anxious tone, "Why, what is the matter, Marie?"

Godfather, however, made up faces and said in a snarling voice,

*"Strike clock strike,
Pendulum goes click-clock—
Hink and honk and honk and hink—
Tick-tock, tick-tock."*

Marie looked at Godfather Drosselmeier with staring eyes, for he looked uglier than ever, swinging his right arm backward and forward as if he were a marionette. She might have been afraid of Godfather if

her mother had not been present and if Fritz, who had sneaked in, had not interrupted with loud laughing, "Oh, you are too comical today. You remind me of my jack-in-the-box. I grew tired of him and threw him behind the stove."

Marie's mother remained serious and asked the judge what he meant by such antics. The judge laughingly replied, "Have you entirely forgotten my clock song? I always sing it to patients like Marie." With this he sat down close to Marie's bed and said, "Do not be angry with me that I didn't at once put out the fourteen eyes of the Mouse-King. It couldn't be done. Instead I will give you a pleasant surprise." With these words he reached into his pocket and slowly pulled out the Nutcracker whose teeth and jaw he had set back into place.

Marie chuckled for joy, but her mother smiled and said, "Now do you see how much Godfather Drosselmeier thinks of your Nutcracker?"

"You must confess, however," the judge interrupted Mrs. Stahlbaum, "that the Nutcracker's body could be improved upon and that his face can hardly

be called handsome. How such a lack of beauty came into his family and was handed down from one generation to another I will tell you, if you wish to hear the story. Perhaps Marie knows the story of Princess Pirlipat, the witch Mouserinks and the skillful watchmaker?"

"Listen to me," called Fritz at this instant. "Godfather Drosselmeier, you really inserted the teeth of the Nutcracker and his jaw isn't as shaky as it was either, but why has he no sword; why didn't you fasten one to his belt?"

"Oh!" replied the judge rather impatiently, "you always have to find fault and criticize, boy! What concern of mine is Nutcracker's sword? I have cured his body, he can himself see where he finds a sword."

"That is true," replied Fritz, "if he amounts to anything he will see to it that he gets some weapons."

"Well, Marie," the judge continued, "tell me, do you know the story of the Princess Pirlipat?"

"No, I don't," replied Marie, "do tell it, will you please?"

"I hope, Judge," said Mrs. Stahlbaum, "that your

story will not be as full of scares as those you usually tell."

"Indeed not, Mrs. Stahlbaum," replied the judge, "on the contrary this story that I am about to tell is full of fun."

"Oh! begin, begin, dear Godfather," the children called, and the Judge told the



FAIRY TALE OF THE HARD NUT



When he saw her lying in the cradle,

Pirlipat's mother was the wife of a king, and therefore a queen, and Pirlipat herself a princess. The king was very joyful when his beautiful daughter was born. When he saw her lying in the cradle, he danced around her and called, "Oh! has anyone ever seen a more beautiful child than my little Pirlipat?" All the



The King danced for joy.

members of his staff, his prime minister and his generals replied, "Never!"

It was not to be denied, for it was a fact, that since the world stood there had probably been no more

beautiful child than Princess Pirlipat. Her face looked as if it were woven of lily white and faint pink silk flakes, her eyes were azure blue, her curly hair resembled gold thread. With all that, Pirlipat had brought two rows of pearly teeth with her when she came into the world.

Everyone was happy. Only the queen seemed restless and anxious, and no one knew why. It was especially noticeable that she had someone watch Pirlipat's cradle all the time. In addition to the doors being guarded by sentinels, and two nurses at the cradle, she had six nurses sitting around the room night after night. But what seemed too foolish for words, each of the six nurses was obliged to hold on her lap a cat which was to be petted all night, so it would purr continually.

It is impossible to guess why Pirlipat's mother ordered all these arrangements, but I know why and will now tell you. Once upon a time many kings and princes were gathered at the court of Pirlipat's father, and they had a brilliant entertainment. Many tournaments, comedies and court balls were given. The king,

in order to impress the court with his wealth (and wishing to make a good levy from the crown treasury) produced an entertainment such as had seldom been seen. As he had been told by the chief steward, that the court astronomer had appointed this time for preparing meats, he ordered a huge banquet and invited all the kings and princes to a bowl of soup in order to surprise them with his feast.

Then he said very pleasantly to the queen, "You know, dear, how much I like sausage!"

The queen knew full well what he was suggesting, for it was his wish that she should oversee the preparation of this sausage. The chief steward was ordered to deliver at once the gold sausage utensils and silver casseroles to the kitchen. A large fire of sandalwood was started. The queen put on a damask apron and soon the savory odour of the sausage and soup met one's nostrils.

Even to the council chamber this smell found its way and the king out of sheer delight sprang up and, "With your permission, gentlemen," he rushed into the kitchen, embraced the queen, and stirring some-

thing into the kettle with his gold scepter, returned to the council chamber. Right now was the important moment when the pork was to be cut into little squares and fried on silver broilers. The ladies of the court withdrew, as the queen wished to do this work alone in order to show her affection and respect for the king.

But just as the pork was beginning to fry, she heard a fine, low voice whisper, "Give me some of the pork sausage, Sister. I want to feast also—I too am a queen—give me some pork."

The queen knew at once, that it was Mrs. Mouserinks, the Mouse-Queen, who was speaking. Mrs. Mouserinks had been living in the palace many years. She declared that she was related to the royal family and that she was queen of Mousedom and had a large household under the hearth. The queen was a good and generous woman, and while she did not wish to acknowledge Mrs. Mouserinks as queen and sister, she was glad to bestow some of the pork on this day of feasting and she replied, "Come out, Mrs. Mouserinks, and I will give you some of my pork."



The Queen knew at once that it was Mrs. Mouserinks.

Then Mrs. Mouserinks leaped merrily onto the hearth and taking the squares of pork very daintily into her little paws, ate one after the other as the queen gave them to her. But all at once Mrs. Mouserinks' aunts, uncles and cousins came forward, as well as her seven sons, who were naughty rascals, and jumped into the pork so that the queen could not defend herself and was much frightened.

Luckily the lord high stewardess just then appeared and chased away the unwelcome guests, so that there was a little pork left. This the court mathematician, who was called for the purpose, divided very artfully into all of the sausages. Drums and trumpets sounded and the princes and dukes came to the feast in gala attire, some on white horses, others in crystal coaches. The king received them with the greatest cordiality and graciousness and then clad in crown and scepter, took his place as sovereign at the head of the table.

When the liver sausage was presented, however, one could see how very much disappointed the king was for he became paler and paler. He lifted his eyes



He murmured, "Not enough pork."

to heaven; he sighed and sighed, as if he had a severe pain. When the blood sausage came, however, he sank sobbing and crying into the back of his arm chair, put both his hands before his face and moaned and lamented. Everyone rose from the table. The king's physician tried in vain to take the unhappy king's pulse, but a deep, nameless sorrow seemed to rack him. At last after much urging, and the use of strong remedies, the king seemed to recover somewhat,—and he murmured, "Not enough pork."

Then the queen came forward, threw herself at his feet and murmured, "Oh! my poor, unhappy husband, how you have suffered, but here you see the guilty one and here belongs the punishment. Oh! it was Mrs. Mouserinks with her seven sons and all her cousins and relations who ate all the pork," and then the queen fainted.

The king jumped up in rage and called, "Chief Stewardess, how did this happen?" The chief stewardess related all she knew and the king decided to take revenge on Mrs. Mouserinks and her family, who had robbed him of his pork. The privy councillor

was sent for, and it was decided to institute proceedings to take possession of her estate. The king, however, was of the opinion that in the meantime she could still be eating his pork, and suggested that the matter be settled by the court clock-maker. This man, whose name was the same as mine, namely, Christian Elias Drosselmeier, promised to rid the palace forever of Mrs. Mouserinks and her family through a very clever device.

He found very artful little machines in which he fastened bacon with a thread, which Mr. Drosselmeier placed all around the residence of Mrs. Bacon-eater. But Mrs. Mouserinks was much too wise not to see her danger in this plan. In spite of all her warning and pleading, not being able to resist the sweet smell of the fried bacon, her seven sons, as well as many of her relatives, went into the little machines. Just when they were beginning to nibble at the bacon, they were caught in a little wire prison, and taken to the kitchen to be cruelly executed. Mrs. Mouserinks left this region of horror with her little retinue. Sorrow, despair, and revenge filled her breast.

The Court was overjoyed, but the queen was greatly troubled, for she knew the disposition of Mrs. Mouserinks, and knew that she would have revenge for the death of her sons and her relatives. In fact, just when the queen was preparing a special dish for the king, Mrs. Mouserinks appeared to the queen and said:

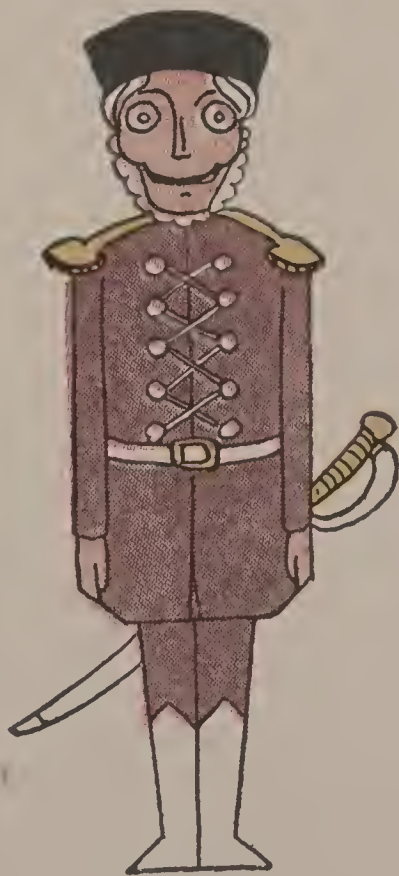
“My sons, my cousins and my relatives have all been killed. Be careful, Madame Queen, that the Mouse-Queen does not bite your little Princess to pieces. Be very careful.” The queen became so terror-stricken that she burned the favorite dish she was preparing for the king, thus for a second time making the king angry. But this is all of the story to-night, next time more.

No matter how much Marie, who had her own ideas about the story, begged him to continue, Godfather Drosselmeier would not be persuaded to continue, but arising said, “Too much of anything is poor policy. To-morrow we will continue.”

Just as he was passing through the door Fritz

called, "Tell me, Godfather, is it really true that you invented the mouse-traps?"

"Why do you ask such foolish questions," called his mother, but the judge smiled and replied, "Am I not a skillful watchmaker and could I not then invent a mouse trap?"



CONTINUATION OF THE FAIRY TALE OF THE HARD NUT

“Now you know full well, children,” continued the judge the next evening, “why the queen was guarding the beautiful Princess Pirlipat so carefully.”

Must she not live in constant fear that Mrs. Mouserinks would carry out her threat and return and bite the Princess so she would die? Drosselmeier’s traps were of no use against the wise and crafty Mrs. Mouserinks. The astronomer of the court, who was also astrologer and reader of stars, advised that only the family of Tom Cat Purr was capable of keeping Mrs. Mouserinks away from the cradle. So it was ordered that each of the nurses should hold on her lap a son of this family, and by petting and stroking him, lighten his labors and make his services more bearable.

But once upon a time, when it was already midnight, one of the head nurses, who sat close to the cradle, suddenly awoke from a deep sleep. Around her everyone seemed to be in deep slumber, no purring, only a dead silence. But what do you suppose



The Mouse Queen ran to the corner of the room.

the head nurse saw? Right in front of her was a very ugly mouse standing on her hind feet and with her head reclining on the face of the princess.

With a cry of fright the head nurse jumped up, everybody was alert in a moment, but in that instant Mrs. Mouserinks, for the large mouse in the cradle of little Pirlipat was no one else, ran to the corner of the room. All the counsellors plunged after her, but too late—she had disappeared through a crack in the floor. Pirlipat awoke at the noise and began to cry most dolefully.

“Thank heaven,” cried the nurses, “she is alive.” But how great was their sorrow, when they looked at the princess and saw how the beautiful child had been changed. Instead of the golden haired white and pink little cherub face, they saw a small, thick head on a misshapen, twisted body. The azure blue eyes had been altered to green, protruding and staring ones, and her little mouth now extended from ear to ear. The queen was beside herself with misery and distress, and the walls of the king’s study had to be padded, for he ran his head again and again against the

wall, and cried in a most distressed voice, "Oh! what an unhappy father am I."

Now he could realize that it would have been better to have eaten the sausage without the pork and to have paid no attention to Mrs. Mouserinks and her tribe under the hearth. But he placed all the blame on the court clock-maker, Christian Elias Drosselmeier, of Nuremberg. For that reason he gave command that if Drosselmeier could not, within four weeks, restore the princess to her former condition, or at least to find a way in which this could be accomplished, he would have him put to death by the disgraceful way of the executioner's axe.

Drosselmeier, though much alarmed, sought aid in his art and his good fortune, and began his first operation, which he deemed most necessary. He took the princess all apart, unscrewed her hands and feet, and viewed the inner structure of her body, and there to his sorrow he found that the older little Pirlipat would become the more ungainly she would appear. Now he was at his wits' end, for what to do he did not know. He very carefully put the princess together again, and

sank down heartsick near her cradle, which he had been forbidden to leave.

Four weeks had already gone by — yes, it was Wednesday, when the king, with angry eyes, looked into the room and proclaimed threateningly, waving his scepter:

“Christian Elias Drosselmeier, if you do not find a remedy for the princess, you must die.”

Drosselmeier wept bitterly, but Princess Pirlipat very contentedly cracked nuts. It was the first time that the clockmaker had noted Pirlipat's unusual appetite for nuts, and in particular he noted the teeth with which she had been born. In fact, directly after her change she had cried incessantly, until a nut was given to her. This she cracked, ate the kernel of it and then became quiet.

“Oh, wise sign of nature,” cried Christian Elias, “you show me the gate to this secret—I will knock, and you will open.” He at once begged permission to have an interview with the court astronomer, and was led to him in care of his guards.



They began to read book after book.

Both men embraced with tears in their eyes, as they had become firm friends. They entered a private room and began to read book after book, dealing with many mysteries. Night overtook them and the court astronomer looked at the stars, and began with the help of Mr. Drosselmeier, who also understood the art, to cast the horoscope of Princess Pirlipat. It was most difficult, but at last,—what joy—it was clearly to be seen, that in order to break the spell of the enchantment which had made her so ugly and de-

formed and bring back her former beauty, it was only necessary that she should eat the sweet kernel of a Krakatuk nut.

A Krakatuk nut has such a hard shell, that a forty-eight pound cannon could drive over it without cracking it. This hard nut must be cracked by a man, who had never been shaved, and who had never worn boots. He must do this in the presence of the princess and he must pass the nut to her with closed eyes. Only after he had gone backwards seven steps, without stumbling, was he allowed to open his eyes.

Three days and three nights these men had worked without ceasing, and the king was at his dinner on Saturday when Drosselmeier, who was to have been beheaded on Sunday morning, entered full of joy and loud rejoicing and told of the remedy they had discovered which would bring back the lost beauty of the princess. The king joyfully embraced him and promised him a sword set with diamonds, four medals and two new Sunday coats.

“Immediately after dinner we will begin,” the king stated in a very friendly way. “You must be certain,

my friend, that the young man who has never shaved and never worn boots, will be at hand with the nut Krakatuk. Do not let him have any wine before hand, so he will not stumble when he walks backward like a crab, for he can have all he wants afterwards."

Drosselmeier was much confused at the speech of the king. With fear and trembling, he informed the king that while the remedy had been found, it was now necessary to find the nut Krakatuk, as well as the young man who would crack it with his teeth, and that there was some doubt whether nut and nut-cracker could be found.

"Then the order that you are to be beheaded will stand," roared the king and swung his scepter over his head. It was fortunate that the king had just partaken of a delicious dinner and was in a good humor, and therefore ready to listen to the entreaties of the queen in Drosselmeier's behalf. She took courage to inform the king that Drosselmeier's problem had been to find the remedy, and that he had accomplished this. The king said he called this quibbling, but at last concluded that the clock-maker and astronomer were to go

forth at once and return with the nut Krakatuk in their possession. The man to crack the nut was to be procured by advertising in various papers, both at home and abroad.

Here the Judge refused to go on with the story, but promised to conclude it the next evening.



CONCLUSION OF THE FAIRY TALE OF THE HARD NUT

The next evening, as soon as the candles had been lighted, the Judge continued his story.

The clockmaker and astronomer had been away fifteen years without finding a trace of the nut Krakatuk. Where they had been and what curious things had happened to them, I could talk about for weeks, but I shall not do so. I shall state at once that Drosselmeier in his sorrow now had a great longing to return to his native city of Nuremberg. This longing came over him when he and his friend were in a deep jungle in Asia, smoking a good pipe of tobacco.

“O my beautiful, beautiful native city of Nuremberg, beautiful city. He who has not seen you, even if he has traveled far and seen London, Paris and Vienna, he must still be longing for you—for you, O Nuremberg, beautiful city, with your beautiful houses and windows.”

When Drosselmeier was complaining thus bitterly, the astronomer became very sympathetic and he

cried so pitifully that he could be heard from one corner of Asia to the other. But he soon composed himself, dried his tears and asked, "Why, my very esteemed comrade, do we sit here and weep? Why do we not go to Nuremberg, for is it not immaterial where and how we find this Krakatuk nut?"

"Yes, you are right," replied Drosselmeier, much comforted. Soon both of them stood up, knocked the ashes from their pipes, and went in one straight line out of the jungle in the center of Asia to Nuremberg. Soon after their arrival, Drosselmeier called on his cousin, the doll manufacturer, enameler and gilder, Christoph Zacharias Drosselmeier, whom he had not seen for many, many years. To him he told the entire story of Princess Pirlipat, of Mrs. Mouserinks and the nut Krakatuk.

The doll carver threw up his hands again and again in great astonishment and called out, "Oh cousin, cousin, what wonderful things you are telling." Drosselmeier related his adventures on his far journey, how he had lived two years with the Date King, how insolently the Almond Count had refused to see him, how



This longing came when they were in a deep jungle in Asia.

he had, without success, applied for help to the Society for the Study of Natural Philosophy, — in short, how all his efforts had ended in failure, and he had not even found a trace of the nut Krakatuk.

While he was telling the story, Christoph Zacharias snapped his fingers several times, turned around on one foot, held his breath and cried, “Yes, yes, unless I am much mistaken, I have it.” With this he threw his hat and his wig into the air for joy, and exclaimed, “Cousin, cousin, you are saved, for I am quite certain I myself own this Krakatuk nut.” Thereupon he brought out a box, from which he took a gold nut of average size.

“See,” he said, showing the nut to his cousin, “this nut has a peculiar history. Many years ago, at Christmas time, a strange man appeared, with a bag of nuts which he desired to sell. Just in front of my doll booth he placed his bag on the street in order to defend himself from the blows of the native nut-seller who was trying to drive him out. In that moment a heavily loaded wagon drove over the bag, cracking all the nuts except one. This nut the stranger, smiling mysteri-



The Doll Carver.

ously, offered to sell me for a dollar of the mint of 1720. I thought this rather queer, but finding such a piece of money in my pocket, I bought the nut and gilded it, not knowing really why I had paid so much for it."

There was no doubt about the cousin's nut being the long sought Krakatuk nut; especially when the court astronomer, who had been called, scraped the gold from the nut, and there found the name carved in the shell in Chinese letters. The joy of the travelers was unbounded and the cousin was the happiest man

under the sun. Drosselmeier assured him that his fortune was made, for in addition to a pension, he would see to it that he would in the future receive free of charge all the gold he needed for gilding.

The travelers had already donned their night caps and were going to bed, when the astronomer said, "My dear comrade, luck never comes singly, and I believe that we have not only found the nut Krakatuk, but also the young man, who shall crack it with his teeth and present the beautifying kernel to the princess. I mean the son of your cousin. No, I cannot sleep," he continued much excited, "but shall at once, this night, cast the young man's horoscope." With that he removed his night cap and at once began his search.

The cousin's son was to be sure, a tall, well-built young man who had never been shaved and never worn boots. It was true, that for several years during Christmas time he had been a puppet, but no one would have been able to detect this in the least. He had been educated through his father's efforts. At Christmas time he wore a handsome red coat with

gold braid, carried a sword, his hat under his arm and had his hair dressed after the latest fashion with a hair net. Thus he appeared very handsome in his father's booth and cracked nuts for the young girls. That is why they called him "Little Nutcracker."

The next morning, the astronomer embraced his friend and called with joy, "He is the one. We have found him, only we must pay attention to two things. First and foremost, you must prepare for your admirable nephew a stout wooden braid of hair which is so connected with the lower jaw that he can receive a sharp jerk with it. Secondly, we must keep it a secret in the town, that we have brought the young man with us who can crack the Krakatuk nut; in fact, it must appear as if he arrived much later. I am reading in the horoscope, that if a number of men break their teeth in trying to crack the nut without success, the king will give as a reward to the young man who succeeds and thus restores her, the princess herself in marriage; and will name the young man as his successor.

The doll carver was highly pleased with the idea

that his son should marry the Princess Pirlipat and become prince and king, and therefore gave the matter entirely into the keeping of the travelers. The braid of hair which Drosselmeier had very successfully attached to the promising young nephew, was working admirably, as with it he had been able to crack with his teeth any number of the hardest peach-stones.

As Drosselmeier and the astronomer had at once reported the finding of the nut to the Court, all preparations for their reception were made. When the travelers arrived with the beauty restorer, many handsome young men, among them several princes, were at hand, willing to try their good set of teeth in an attempt to disenchant the princess. The travelers were much shocked when they again saw the princess. Her little body, with the tiny hands and feet could hardly carry the deformed head. The ugliness of the face was increased by a white cotton beard which had grown around her mouth and chin. Everything happened as the astronomer had read in the horoscope. One foolish prince after another broke his teeth and

hurt his jaw, without being able to help the princess in the least, and when one, nearly fainting, was handed to a dentist, he murmured, "That was a hard nut."

After the king, in the anguish of his heart, had offered the princess, as well as his kingdom, to the one who succeeded in disenchanting the princess, the well-behaved, gentle, young Drosselmeier presented himself at court and requested that he be allowed to try his luck. After greeting the king and queen, and especially the Princess Pirlipat most politely, he received from the hands of the chief toastmaster the nut Krakatuk. He put it at once into his mouth, gave a jerk to his braid and crack,—crack. The shell of the nut broke into many pieces. He very cleverly cleaned the nut from the fibre which surrounded it and with a very low curtsey handed it to the princess, after which he closed his eyes and walked backwards. The princess swallowed the nut at once, and Oh! such a miracle! Gone was the deformity—and in her place stood a beautiful angelic young girl, with a face like peaches and cream, and azure eyes. Her curly hair



The Princess swallowed the nut.

looked as if it were gold thread. Trumpets and kettle drums could be heard amid the shouts of joy of the people. The king and his entire court were hopping and dancing, just as they did when Pirlipat was born, and the queen had to be restored with eau-de-cologne for she had fainted from joy and delight.

The great rioting and noise confused young Drosselmeier, who had not completed his seven steps. But he bravely continued and was just putting back his right foot for the seventh step when squeaking and whining Mrs. Mouserinks arose through the floor.



The young man, stumbling, almost fell down.

The young man who was about to put his foot down, stepped upon her and stumbling almost fell down. Oh, misfortune! All at once the young man was just as deformed as the Princess Pirlipat had been. The body was shrunken and could hardly support the large, misshapen head with its protruding eyes and its broad, gaping mouth. Instead of his braid of hair he wore a narrow wooden cape, which controlled the lower jaw.

The clockmaker and astronomer were afraid something might happen to them when they saw Mrs.

Mouserinks injured on the floor. But her wickedness was not to remain unpunished, for young Mr. Drosselmeier had stepped on her neck so severely with the sharp heel of his shoes, that she was mortally wounded. When Mrs. Mouserinks was about to die, she squeaked out:

“O Krakatuk, hard Nut—

From which I now must die,

Nutcracker soon will pass away

My son with the seven crowns will repay

And avenge his mother.

O life so full of joy, from you I must depart,

Oh peril of death,—Squeak!”

With this cry Mrs. Mouserinks departed this life and was taken away by the king’s official stove tender.

No one had paid attention to young Mr. Drosselmeier, but the princess reminded the king of his promise, and he at once gave orders to have the young hero appear on the scene. When, however, the unfortunate man with his deformity stepped forward, the princess covered both her eyes and said, “Away, away with that ugly Nutcracker,” and soon the court



Nuremberg

marshal took hold of him by his little shoulders and pushed him through the door. The king was furious, that he should have been expected to have a Nutcracker for a son-in-law. He blamed it all upon the stupidity of the clockmaker and astronomer and had them expelled from the court.

The horoscope which the astronomer had cast in Nuremberg had not shown this, but he was determined to seek further happenings in the stars, and here he claimed to find that the young Drosselmeier would behave so well in his new environment, that in spite of his deformity, he would become prince and king. His misshapen body could disappear only when

the seven headed son of Mrs. Mouserinks, who was now the Mouse-King, should be killed by him, and when a lady should love him in spite of his deformity.

We are told that it came to pass that young Drosselmeier was seen at Christmas time in his father's booth, as Nutcracker, but also was seen as a prince.

That is the fairy tale of the hard nut, and now you know why so many people say, "That was a hard nut to crack, and why Nutcrackers are usually so ugly."

And thus the judge closed his story. Marie thought that the Princess Pirlipat was unkind and ungrateful but Fritz assured her that if the Nutcracker was as brave as he pretended to be, he would conquer the Mouse-King and thus soon regain his former fine figure.

In a week's time Marie was well again and could dance around the room as usual. In the cabinet everything looked beautiful. New, glistening trees, flowers, houses, as well as shining dolls, stood there. First of all Marie again found her beloved Nutcracker who was smiling at her from the second shelf with perfectly sound teeth. As she was looking at her

favorite with great joy, she became frightened for she remembered the story that Godfather Drosselmeier had told about the Nutcracker and the quarrel with Mrs. Mouserinks and her son. She was now satisfied that her Nutcracker could be no one else than the young Mr. Drosselmeier from Nuremberg, the very pleasant nephew of her godfather, who alas, had been bewitched by Mrs. Mouserinks. There was no doubt about it that the skilled Watchmaker at the Court of Pirlipat's father was no one else than Judge Drosselmeier himself, in fact, she was quite certain of this when she listened to the story.

"But why didn't your uncle help you?" Marie asked, as she became more and more impressed with the idea that the battle she had witnessed was to save the kingdom and crown of the Nutcracker. Had she not seen that all the other dolls were his subjects and was it not a fact that the prophecy of the court astronomer had been fulfilled and young Mr. Drosselmeier had become King of the dolls?

During the time that clever Marie was turning this over in her mind, she believed that the Nutcracker

and his vassals must really come to life and begin to move. But this was not the case, everything in the cupboard remained quiet and motionless. Marie, however, unwilling to give up her idea was convinced that this was due to the evil spell cast upon them by Mrs. Mouserinks and her seven-headed son. Out loud she said, "Even if you are not able to move or speak to me, dear Mr. Drosselmeier, I know that you understand how good my intentions are. You may count on my assistance, whenever you need it. At least I shall ask your uncle to help you with his skill, should it be necessary." The Nutcracker remained quiet, but to Marie it seemed as if a sigh which seemed to resound from the panes of glass, could be heard throughout the cupboard.

It was twilight when Marie's father and Judge Drosselmeier made their appearance. In a short time Luise had the tea table ready and the family gathered around it, each one having something amusing to tell. Marie had brought her little easy chair and seated herself at the side of Godfather Drosselmeier. Just when there was a moment of silence, Marie looked up at the

judge with her large blue eyes and said:

"I am now convinced, dear Godfather, that my Nutcracker is your nephew, the young Mr. Drosselmeier from Nuremberg. He is a prince, or rather a king, as was foretold by your companion, the astronomer, but you know he is at open war with the son of Mrs. Mouserinks, the mean Mouse-King. Why don't you help him?"

Marie now repeated the entire details of the battle as she had witnessed it, and was often interrupted by the loud laughter of her mother and Luise. Only Fritz and the judge remained serious.

"Where does the girl get such foolish notions?" asked her father.

"She has a lively imagination—it really is more of a dream, brought about by the fever from the wound in her arm," replied her mother.

"It isn't all true," cried Fritz, "for my red hussars are not such poltroons, or I would see to them."

Smiling, the judge took Marie on his lap and whispered, "You, dear Marie, have been favored above the rest of us. You are like Pirlipat, a born princess,

for you reign over a bright kingdom. But you will suffer much, if you are going to defend the poor, misshapen Nutcracker, as the Mouse-King is following him into every highway and byway. But not I—only you, you alone can save him, be steadfast and loyal.”



THE VICTORY

Not long after this, Marie was awakened on a bright moonlight night by a peculiar noise, which seemed to come from the corner of the room. It sounded as though little stones were being unloaded, and with it a loud cracking and squeaking was heard.

“Oh! the mice, the mice are here again,” cried Marie and wanted to call her mother, but she couldn’t utter a sound, nor move a limb. She saw the Mouse-king push himself through a hole in the floor and run about the room with his seven pairs of sparkling eyes and his seven crowns.

With one leap he jumped on the table that stood beside Marie’s bed and said, “Hi-hi-hi! Give me your sugar plums, your marzipan, little girl,—or else I will bite your Nutcracker—your Nutcracker.” So hissed the Mouse-King, showing his teeth; then he jumped down and ran into the hole.

Marie was so frightened at the ugly apparition, that she was quite pale the next morning and was so excited, that she could hardly talk. Over and over

again, she thought she would tell her mother or Luise, or at least Fritz, what had happened to her but she always decided, "They will not believe me and will only laugh at me." It was very clear to her, however, that if she wished to save the Nutcracker she would have to sacrifice her sugar plums and marzipan. All she had of these she therefore laid on the ledge of the cupboard.

In the morning her mother called her and said, "I cannot understand how it is we have mice in our living room now. Just see, Marie, they have eaten all your candy." It was really so,—all the candy was gone except a few pieces for which the greedy Mouse-King evidently did not care. They were nibbled at and had to be thrown away. Marie did not grieve about this, however, as she was overjoyed at believing she had saved her Nutcracker.

But lo and behold! The following night close to her ear there was the same squeaking and hissing. Oh! the Mouse-King was there again, and his eyes sparkled more meanly than the night before, as he hissed through his teeth, "You will have to give me

your sugar cookies and your dolls, or I will bite the Nutcracker," and then the mean Mouse-King ran away again. Marie was very sad.

The next morning she went to the cupboard and looked at all her pretty candy dolls, for here was a shepherd with his sheep, a letter carrier with letters in his hand, and four pretty couples, nicely dressed young men with especially beautiful girls, were swinging in a Russian dance. Just back of a few dancers were Joan of Arc and a companion. For these Marie cared little, but in the corner was a red-cheeked candy baby, her favorite—and then she burst into tears.

"Oh," she called, turning to the Nutcracker, "dear Mr. Drosselmeier, I will do anything to save you, but it surely is not easy." Nutcracker seemed so grieved when she looked at him that she at once decided to sacrifice all her dolls and again placed them on the ledge of the cupboard. She kissed the shepherd and his lambs, and at last also brought out her favorite, the little red-cheeked baby, which she placed in the back row, putting Joan of Arc and her companion in the front row.

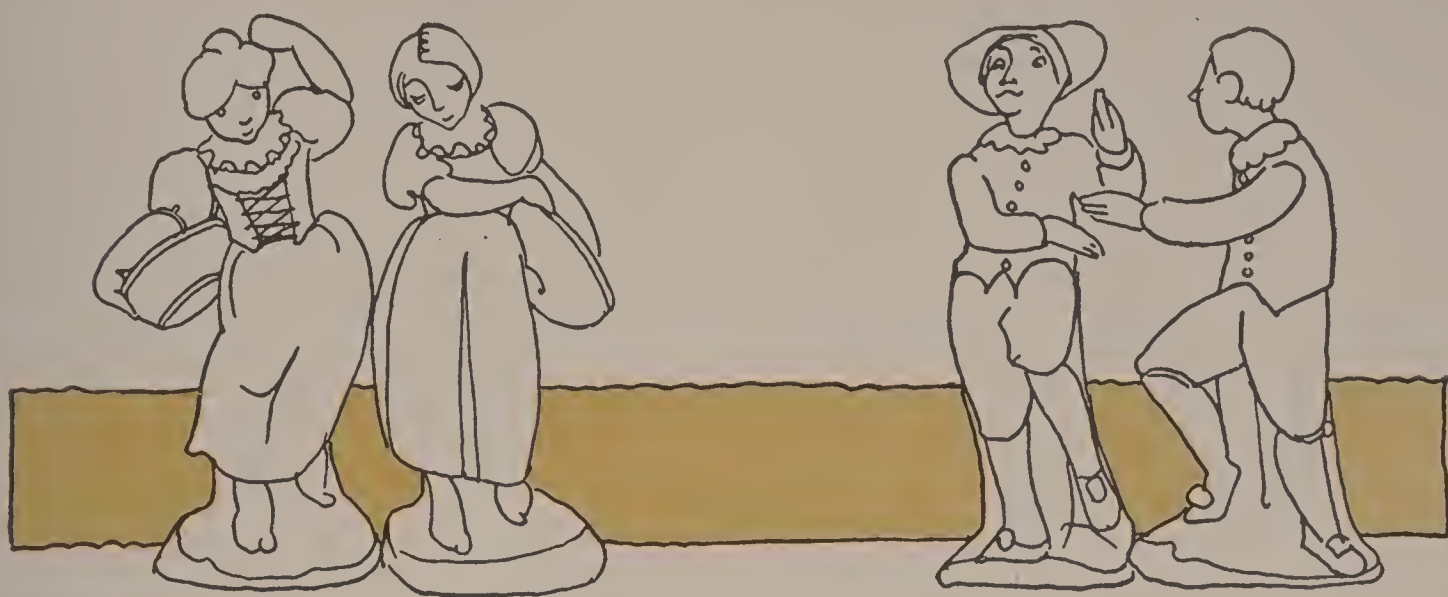
"Why this is quite dreadful," cried Marie's mother the next morning. "There must be a large, mean mouse in the cupboard, for all of Marie's pretty candy dolls have been nibbled and partly eaten." Marie could hardly keep from crying, but when she remembered that it was to save the Nutcracker, she smiled again. In the evening Mrs. Stahlbaum was telling her husband and the judge about the havoc that a large mouse was causing in the cupboard. They all seemed to think that there should be some way to get rid of it.

"I know how," said Fritz, "the baker next door has a fine tom cat. I will get him up here and he will soon put an end to such a mouse, even if she is Mrs. Mouse-rinks, or her son, the Mouse-King."

"Yes," replied his father, "and he will jump on every chair and table, and break glasses and cups and cause much damage."

"Oh, I don't think so,—the baker's cat is a very clever fellow, and I only wish I could balance on the edge of the roof the way he does."

"No cat at night time, please," called Luise, who had an aversion for them.



Her pretty candy dolls.

“Of course, we can set up a trap,—haven’t we one in the house?”

“Godfather Drosselmeier can make one for us,” called Fritz, “he is the inventor of them.”

Everybody laughed at this, and upon the assurance of Mrs. Stahlbaum that there was no mousetrap in the house, the judge at once had one brought from his home.

Fritz and Marie now had lively recollections of their godfather’s “Fairy Tale of the Hard Nut” and when the cook fried the bacon, Marie said to Dora, “Madam Queen, you had better be on your guard against Mrs. Mouserinks and her family.”

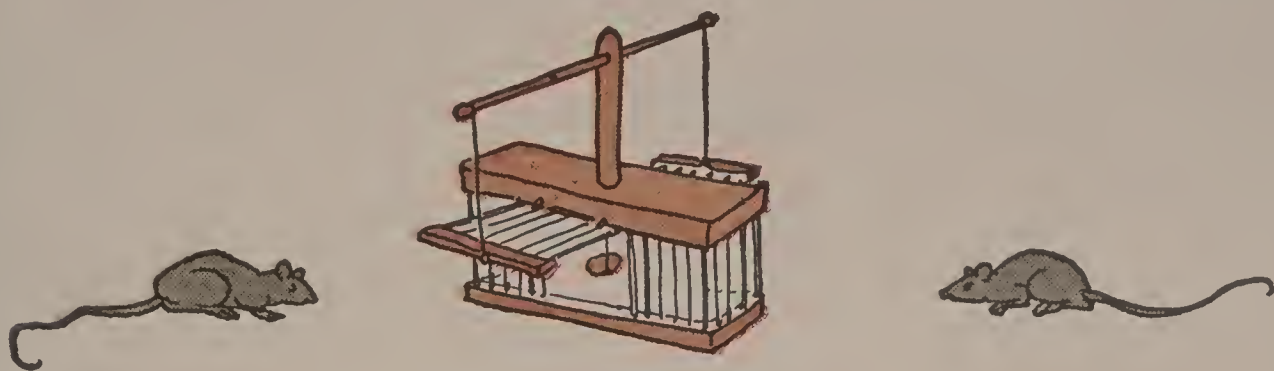
Fritz, however, drew his sword and said, “I would

show them if they came near.” But everything above and below the hearth remained quiet. When the judge fastened the bacon in the trap, and very cautiously placed the trap in the cupboard, Fritz called, “You had better be very careful, Godfather Watchmaker, that the Mouse-King will not play some tricks on you.”

The next night Marie was much more excited. Something icy-cold was tapping on her arm and there was something rough against her cheek which squeaked and hissed in her ear. It was the mean Mouse-King sitting on her shoulder and with his teeth grinding and grating, he hissed into her ear. She was unable to move for fright.

“Hush, hush, I’ll not go in the house,—give all you have, your picture books, your dresses, or you will have no peace—for you must know Nutcracker will be bitten—hi-hi-squeak, squeak.”

Now Marie was filled with sorrow and distress. She looked pale and anxious the next morning. Her mother, thinking Marie was grieving about her dolls and also afraid of the mouse, said, “Do not worry,



Artful little machines.

dear child, we will get rid of the ugly mouse. If the trap does not catch this mouse, we will take Fritz's advice and get the baker's tom cat."

As soon as Marie found herself alone in the living room, she went at once to the cupboard and sobbing said, "Oh my dear Mr. Drosselmeier, what can I, poor, unhappy girl do for you? Even if I give my picture books and my very pretty dress which Santa brought me, for the Mouse-King to gnaw on, will he not at last want me and bite me? What shall I do now, what shall I do?"

When Marie was thus lamenting, she noticed that a spot of blood had remained on the neck of the Nutcracker since that eventful night. She took him carefully from the shelf and began to rub the spot with her handkerchief. But she could hardly believe her senses, for when she was rubbing she felt the Nut-

cracker coming to life in her hand. Quickly she returned him to the shelf and then his little mouth quivered and he whispered, "My dear Marie, loyal friend, how much I owe to you—no, no picture book nor Christmas dress shall you sacrifice for me—just produce a sword,—a sword, and leave the rest to me." Here he became speechless, and his sad, expressive eyes again were lifeless.

Marie was no longer afraid. In fact, she was overjoyed for now she knew a remedy that would help the Nutcracker without any more painful sacrifices on her part. But where should she get a sword for the little fellow? Marie decided to confide in Fritz and as their parents were away, and they were alone in the living room, she again told him the whole story and asked his advice about saving the Nutcracker.

"As far as the sword is concerned, I can help the Nutcracker for I retired an old colonel with pension a few days ago, and he will have no more use for his beautiful sharp sword." Fritz at once brought forth the colonel from the corner of the third shelf, where he was apparently enjoying his pension, relieved him



The victorious Nutcracker knelt on one knee.

of his silver sword and fastened it on the Nutcracker.

Being much afraid Marie could not go to sleep the following night. About midnight she thought she heard queer noises in the living room. All at once she heard a squeak. "The Mouse-King, the Mouse-King," called Marie and sprang, badly scared, out of the bed.

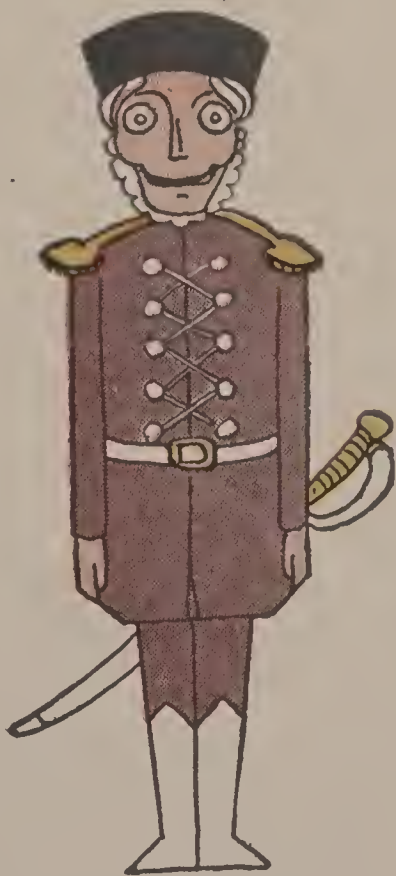
Everything was quiet, but soon she heard a knocking on the door and a low voice whispered, "Dear Miss Stahlbaum, you can safely open the door, I have good news."

Marie recognized the voice of young Mr. Drosselmeier, slipped into her dress and quickly opened the door. There stood the Nutcracker, with the bloody sword in his right hand and in his left a candle.

As soon as he saw Marie, he knelt on one knee and said, "You dear Lady, are the one who gave me the courage of a knight, and the strength of my arms to subdue this insolent fellow. Conquered, the treacherous Mouse-King is now destroyed. Will you, dear Lady accept from the hand of your devoted knight, yours until death, the proof of victory?" With this the Nutcracker slipped from his arm the seven golden

crowns of the Mouse-King and handed them to Marie, who was delighted with the gift.

Nutcracker then stood up and continued, "Oh, Miss Stahlbaum, what wonderful things I could show you at this moment when I have subdued my enemy, if you would favor me and follow me a few steps. Oh, favor me and come, dear Lady."



THE KINGDOM OF THE DOLLS

Marie was well aware that she was entitled to Nutcracker's gratitude, and was convinced that he would keep his word and show her many wonderful things. "I will go, Mr. Drosselmeier, but it must not be far nor take too long, as I have not had my night's sleep."

"I will choose, therefore," replied Nutcracker, "the nearest way, even if a little more difficult."

He walked ahead and Marie followed him, until he stood before the large heavy wardrobe in the hall. Marie was astonished to see that the doors of this cupboard, which were usually securely locked, stood open, and she could distinctly see her father's traveling fox furs hanging in front. Nutcracker climbed very skillfully up on the ledge and onto the moulding, in order to reach the large tassel which was fastened to a heavy cord on the back of the fur coat. When Nutcracker gave a jerk on the tassel, a dainty flight of cedar wood steps came down through the sleeve.

"Will you be good enough to go up?" called Nut-



"Will you be good enough to go up?" called Nutcracker.

cracker. Marie did as she was asked, but had hardly gone through the sleeve and looked out at the collar, when a blinding light met her view and she found herself in the center of a meadow, heavy with fragrance, from which millions of sparks were shining forth like glittering diamonds.

"We are now in the candy meadow," said Nutcracker, "but we shall soon pass out through that gateway." Now Marie became aware of a beautiful gate arising a few steps from them in the meadow. It seemed to be built of white, brown and pink speckled marble, but when she came nearer she saw that the entire mass was baked out of sugar, almonds and raisins.

"For this reason," Nutcracker explained, "it was known as the Almond-Raisin Gate." On a protruding gallery of this gate, seemingly of barley sugar, six little monkeys in red waistcoats were producing beautiful music. Soon Marie was surrounded by the most delicious fragrance which came from a nearby forest. In the dark foliage there was so much that was sparkling and glistening that one could see quite distinctly gold



Six Little Monkeys' Orchestra.

and silver fruit hanging on brightly colored stems. The trunks and branches were adorned with ribbons and flowers, like a bridal couple and their merry guests. And when the orange perfume floated like waves, the branches and leaves murmured, the tinsel crackled and rustled, like joyful music, to the accompaniment of which the sparkling lights were skipping and dancing.

“Oh! how beautiful it is here,” cried Marie, she was so happy and delighted.

“We are in the Christmas Forest, dearest Fräulein,” said Nutcracker.

“Oh! if only I could stay here a little while,” said Marie, “it is so lovely.” Nutcracker clapped his little hands and immediately appeared some shepherds and

shepherdesses, hunters and huntresses who were so delicate and white that they seemed to be made of pure sugar. They brought forth a most lovely feudal chair of solid gold, laid a white, glossy cushion in it and very politely invited Marie to recline on it. Scarcely had she done so when the shepherds and shepherdesses danced a graceful ballet for which the hunters whistled. Then they all disappeared in the shrubbery.

“You will pardon,” said Nutcracker, “that the dance was such a failure, but these people are all tight rope walkers, and can only do the same thing over and over again. There is also a reason for the music being so weak,—the pastry hangs just above their heads in the Christmas trees, but too high to reach. Shall we not walk on?”

“Oh! how beautiful and charming it is here and it certainly delights me,” said Marie getting up and following Nutcracker who had gone ahead.

They walked along a murmuring brook from which a delicious fragrance seemed to come filling the entire forest. “It is the Orange Brook,” said Nutcracker

when questioned, "but except for its fragrance it does not compare with Lemonade River, which like it, flows into Almond-Milk Lake." In fact, Marie soon heard a louder splashing and rippling and saw the broad Lemonade River proudly threading its course in cream colored waves through the green, glowing shrubbery.

A refreshing cool air, which strengthened chest and heart, arose from this water. Not far away, a slow, dark yellow stream was quietly wending its fragrant way. On its shores pretty little children were catching plump fish, which they ate at once. In the distance on this river, Marie could see an imposing village. Houses, churches, barns were all dark brown covered with golden roofs, and many walls were so colorfully decorated that it looked as if colored candies had been used in their construction.

"That is Sugar Cookie Village," said Nutcracker, "which lies on Honey River. The people living there are very handsome but they are usually cross, for they suffer from toothache, and for that reason we will not stop there at present."

Just then Marie noticed a little city with gayly col-

ored, transparent houses, which looked very attractive. Nutcracker went toward it and Marie heard an hilarious noise and saw thousands of neat little people unpacking high, loaded wagons in the market place. The cargo looked like bright colored papers and slabs of chocolate.

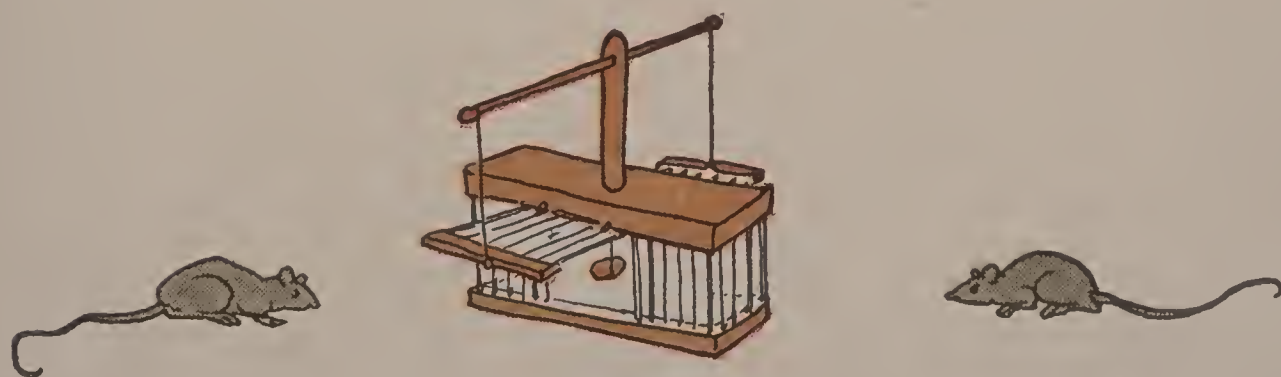
“We are in Bonbonville,” said Nutcracker, “and a cargo has just arrived from Paperland and from the Chocolate King. The poor Bonbon houses were in great danger lately as they were attacked by an army of gnats and that is the reason they are now covering their houses with the gifts from Paperland, and building trenches, supported by slabs from the Chocolate King. But, dear Fräulein Stahlbaum, we must not loiter in these villages, but visit the capital of this country.”

Nutcracker hurried forward and Marie, full of curiosity, followed. In a few moments the air was filled with the fragrance of roses and everything was tinged with a rosy hue. This Marie noticed was the reflection from a crimson lake, the waves of which were flowing along in silvery pink, while their splash-

ing and murmuring produced beautiful tunes. On this shimmering water, silver-white swans with gold neck-bands were swimming, and they joined in the melody, singing the most tuneful songs; while fishes like diamonds could be seen leaping up and down in this crimson water, as if taking part in the merriest dance.

“Oh!” cried Marie, “that is the lake that Godfather Drosselmeier was going to make for me, and I am the little girl who is going to feed the swans.”

Nutcracker smiled ironically, which Marie had never seen him do before and replied, “Your Godfather could never produce anything like this.”



THE CANDY CAPITAL

Nutcracker again clapped his little hands, and at once the crimson lake murmured louder and the waves splashed higher, and in the distance Marie saw a gayly colored, opalescent shell wagon sparkling with all sorts of gems and drawn by two dolphins with golden scales. Twelve little negro boys, with caps and aprons woven from the feathers of humming birds leaped to the shore and carried first Marie and then the Nutcracker over the waves into the wagon, which then glided over the lake.

Oh! how glorious it was to ride in this shell-wagon, surrounded by rose perfume and rosy waves. The two gold-scaled dolphins lifted their nostrils and gushed forth high into the air crystal jets of water and as these fell in rainbow colors, one could hear two silver-toned voices saying, "Who swims on the lake so airy? the fairy, the fairy, bim, bim—little fishes swim, swim,—Swans, move and sing, and the fairies bring, rosy waves dash, clash, flash,—ever on."

The twelve little negro pages who had jumped on the back of the shell wagon seemed to resent the song



How glorious it was to ride in this shell-wagon!

of the water, for they shook their parasols so violently that the date leaves from which they were made crackled and spluttered. With that they stamped their feet and sang, "Click-clack, click-clack forward and back—negro dancers cannot be slack; fishes and swans bestir yourself, drone shell-wagon, drone,—click-clack, forward and back."

"These negroes are very merry people," said Nutcracker, "but if they keep on they will drive the whole lake into rebellion." It was true, for soon one could hear a deafening noise of wonderful voices coming from the air and water. Marie was not disturbed, however, as she saw only charming girls' faces smiling at her from the waves.

"Oh!" she cried, clapping her hands. "Oh! look, dear Mr. Drosselmeier; there is Princess Pirlipat smiling at me. Oh look, look!"

Nutcracker, however, sighed rather sadly and said, "That is not Princess Pirlipat, that is yourself, always your own face, that smiles from each rosy wave."

In that moment the twelve negro pages picked her up and carried her to the shore. She found herself in

a green thicket, which seemed even more wonderful than the Christmas Forest, for everything sparkled and glistened. Especially marvelous were the rare fruits of the strangest color and fragrance, hanging on the trees.

“We are in the Confetti Grove,” said Nutcracker, “and over there is the capital.”

What did Marie see there? Not only were the walls and towers gay-colored, but the shape of the buildings was different from anything she had seen on earth. Instead of roofs, these houses had dainty braided crowns and the towers were decorated with the most delicate foliage she had ever seen. As she passed through the gate-way, which looked as if it were built of macaroons and candied fruit, silver soldiers stood at “Attention” and one little man in a brocaded dressing-gown threw his arms around Nutcracker’s neck with the words, “Welcome, dear Prince, welcome to Confectionville.”

Marie was rather astonished to have the Nutcracker addressed as prince by such a distinguished gentleman. But in a moment she heard so many voices cheering and laughing, so much music and singing, that

she could think of nothing else and asked Nutcracker to explain the meaning of all this.

Nutcracker replied, "This is nothing unusual. This is a well populated, merry city and this happens every day. Come this way, please."

They had gone but a few steps, when they came to the large market place, which presented the most gorgeous view. The buildings around it were made of fancy pastry, all having many galleries. In the center stood a high, candied cake like an obelisk. This was the tree cake, and around it four artificial fountains sent forth lemonade and other sweet drinks. In the basin were all kinds of ice creams, and ices to which one wanted to help oneself.

But prettier than all this were the little people, who were there by the thousands moving in great throngs, shouting, laughing, and joking. In short, they produced the uproar Marie had heard from a distance. Here were handsomely dressed ladies and gentlemen, Armenians, Greeks and Tyroleans, officers and soldiers, ministers, shepherds and clowns, in fact, people of every kind that are found in the world.



The Confetti Grove.

On one corner the tumult became louder as the people made way for the great mogul who was being carried by in a palanquin, accompanied by ninety-three dignitaries of the realm and seven hundred slaves. It so happened, however, that on the other corner, the fisherman's guild of five hundred were having their procession. The turkish mogul also just had decided to ride over the market square with three thousand soldiers. Added to this a large troop from the Opera came by, who with a full band were triumphantly singing, "Up, thank the mighty sun," making straight for the cake. There certainly was a pushing, a crowding, and a noisy carrying on.

Soon one heard great cries of distress, for in the crowding a fisherman had knocked off the head of an Indian priest, and the grand mogul was nearly run over by a clown. The noise grew louder and louder, and the crowd was beginning to be so boisterous that many were fighting, when the gentleman in the brocaded dressing gown, who had greeted the Nutcracker as prince at the gate, climbed up the tree cake.

After a very clear-toned bell had rung three times,

he called three times very loudly, "Pastry-cook, pastry-cook, pastry-cook." At once the noise ceased and after each procession was again in order, the soiled grand mogul had been cleaned up and the Indian priest's head had been replaced, the noise went on as before.

"Why does he call a pastry-cook, Mr. Drosselmeier?" asked Marie.

"Oh! Fräulein," answered Nutcracker, "pastry and confectionery have a great power here, as it is believed that with them one can make anything one wants of any person. The little merry people are so afraid of this power, that the mere mention of the word will quiet the greatest tumult, which the mayor has just proven to you. No one then thinks of anything earthly, of the blow in his side, or of a black eye, but turns his thoughts inward and says, "What is man and what can be made of him?"

Marie now could not refrain from a loud exclamation of wonder for she stood before a palace with one hundred towers all lighted with crimson glowing lights. Here and there on the walls were large

bouquets of violets, narcissus, tulips and stocks, the rich colors of which enhanced the white of the building with their pink glow. The large dome of the center building, as well as the pyramid-shaped towers, was strewn with thousands of sparkling gold and silver stars.

“Now we are before the Marzipan Castle,” said Nutcracker.

Marie was speechless before this enchanted palace, but she noticed that the roof of one of the large towers was entirely missing and that little men standing on a scaffold of cinnamon sticks were trying to restore it.

Before Marie could ask for an explanation, the Nutcracker continued, “A short time ago this palace was threatened with a wicked devastation, if not with entire destruction. The Giant Sweet-Tooth came this way, and quickly bit into the roof of yonder tower and was nibbling on the dome when the citizens of this city bought him off by giving him as a tribute an entire quarter of the city as well as a part of the grove. This satisfied his appetite and he went on.”

At this moment one could hear soft, low music,

the doors of the palace were opened and twelve pages came out carrying torches of stems of cloves in their little hands. Their heads consisted of one pearl, the body of rubies and emeralds, and they walked on feet made of pure gold. They were followed by four ladies about the size of Marie's new doll, but so exquisitely dressed, that Marie at once knew they must be princesses.

They embraced Nutcracker most affectionately and cried in a sad voice, "Oh, my prince, my dear prince. Oh, my brother!"

Nutcracker seemed elated but sad, for he wiped the tears from his eyes, took hold of Marie's hand and spoke in a formal manner, "This is Fräulein Marie Stahlbaum who saved my life, the daughter of a very honorable physician. If she had not thrown her slipper at the right time, and procured for me the sword of the retired colonel, I would by this time be in my grave bitten to pieces by that cursed Mouse-King." Turning to Marie they cried, "Oh! are you like Pirli-pat, although she is a born princess, in beauty, goodness and virtue?"

“No, no,” cried Marie. All the ladies cried, “Yes, yes,” and embraced Marie, sobbing, “Oh, noble saviour of our beloved princely brother.”

Now the ladies escorted Marie and Nutcracker into the interior of the palace, into a room the walls of which were made of different colored crystals. But Marie liked best of all the dear little chairs, tables, bureaus and other furniture standing all around which were made of mahogany and teak wood decorated with gold flowers. The princess urged Marie and Nutcracker to be seated and said they would at once prepare a meal.

They then brought out a quantity of little dishes of all kinds of the finest Japanese porcelain, spoons, knives and forks, a grater, casseroles, and other kitchen utensils of gold and silver. They brought the most delicious fruits and pastry, such as Marie had never seen, and with their dainty white hands prepared the fruit, grated the almonds, pounded the spices, in short did what was necessary and Marie could see at once how well they knew how to prepare a delicious meal. In fact, if the truth were known, she



"Oh! are you like Pirlipat?"

was wishing that she too might help. The most beautiful of Nutcracker's sisters, as if reading her thoughts, handed her a gold mortar with the words, "Oh dear friend, beloved deliverer of my brother, pound a little of this loaf sugar."

While Marie was merrily pounding in the mortar, sounding as it did, like a pretty tune, Nutcracker began to relate how in the fierce battle between him and the army of the Mouse-King, he was defeated, owing to the cowardice of his own troops, and how the ugly Mouse-King was then about to devour him, when Marie came to his rescue by offering a number of her subjects as tribute. It seemed to Marie while listening to this story, that Nutcracker's words, yes even her pounding were fading away into the distance, and she saw silver gauze, like thin fog clouds, rising in the air, in which the princesses, pages, Nutcracker, yes, even she herself were floating—she could hear a queer singing, buzzing, and chirping which was growing less and less, and then as if in a cloud she was going higher—higher and higher—higher and higher—

CONCLUSION

Purr-Puff, it went—Marie fell down from this immense height. That was an awful shock.

She opened her eyes at once—there she lay in her bed, it was day time and her mother was standing by her and said, “How can anyone sleep so late, it is long past breakfast time!”



Marie, as if in a cloud, was going higher and higher.

“Oh Mother, dear Mother,” stuttered Marie and looked around somewhat dazed, “where have I been, where did young Mr. Drosselmeier take me last night and what wonderful things did I see?”

Then she began to tell her story. Her mother looked at her most astonished. When Marie finished her mother said, “You have had a long and very beautiful dream, my child, but now you must forget it.” Marie insisted, however, that she had not been dreaming, but that she had seen it all. Then her mother led her to the cupboard, took the Nutcracker from the third shelf and said, “How can you insist that this Nuremberg wooden doll could come to life?”

“But dear Mother,” replied Marie, “I know full well that the Nutcracker is young Mr. Drosselmeier of Nuremberg and a nephew of our godfather.” At this Marie’s father and mother both burst into hearty peals of laughter.

“Oh!” said Marie, almost crying, “now you are laughing at my Nutcracker, dear father, and you should have heard how well he spoke of you, for

when we arrived at the Marzipan Palace, he introduced me to his sisters, the princesses, and said my father was a most estimable physician." At this they laughed louder than ever, even Luise and Fritz joining in. Then Marie ran into the other room and brought from her little chest the seven crowns of the Mouse-King and handing them to her mother said, "See, dear Mother, those are the seven crowns which young Mr. Drosselmeier gave me last night, as a proof of his victory."

Much astonished they all looked at the little crowns, which were made up of an unknown, but very bright metal. The work was so skillful that it seemed almost impossible that human hands could have accomplished it. The Doctor, much in earnest, began to ask Marie where she had obtained these crowns, but she insisted she had already told them. And when her father became impatient and said she was not truthful, she burst into tears and said, "There is nothing else for me to tell you."

At that moment the door opened, and the judge entered. "Why, what has happened here, why is my

good child crying and sobbing?" he asked. Marie's father told him the story and showed him the crowns.

When the judge looked at these, he laughed and exclaimed, "Nonsense, nonsense, those are the little crowns that years ago I used to wear on my watch chain, and which I gave to Marie on her second birthday. Don't you remember that?"

But no one seemed to have any recollection of this, and when Marie saw that they all were friendly again, she ran over to the judge and said:

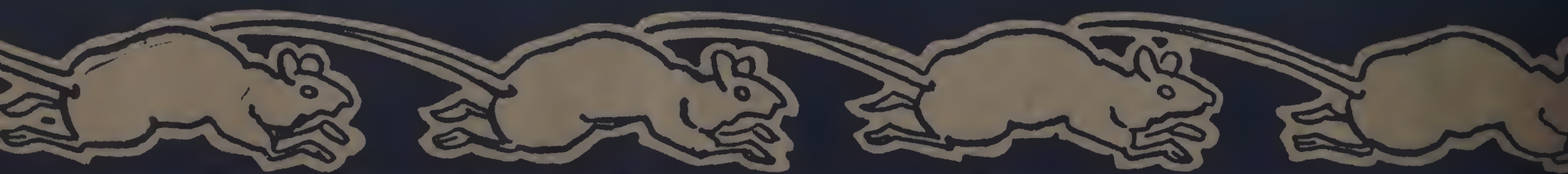
"You know everything, Godfather, and you also know that my Nutcracker is your nephew from Nuremberg, and that he gave me the little crowns." At this they all became serious and commanded Marie to stop imagining anything more or she would be punished.

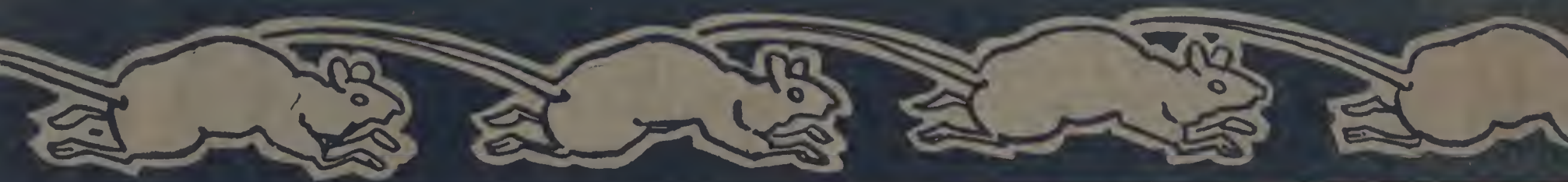
Now, of course, Marie could not speak any more of her strange adventure, but the pictures of the fairy kingdom played around her in billowy waves of sweetest ripples and in charming lovely sounds. She thought about it again and again, so much so, that she

could sit quietly and not play, and they at last called her a dreamer.

Yes, in the merry Christmas time children dream wonderful things. And beautiful dreams are also fairy tales, as is this one of the Nutcracker and the Mouse-King.







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